

The result of the
battle. the translator



The key to writing an epic poem is to show that there is a predominant hero who paved the way for a nation. This hero should be someone who shows qualities such as loyalty to his followers, bravery and courage just to name a few. Strophe 8 in Burton Raffels translation of Beowulf shows all of these qualities in Beowulf. Strophe 8 is the tale of Beowulf's first of three battles with deadly beasts.

It starts out by telling the reader that Grendel is coming "out from the marsh... bearing God's hatred" (394-395) revealing to all that Grendel comes from a hellish hole and is all that is evil. Little does Grendel know that this trip for prey shall not be as easy as the previous many. The monster who once took 30 men to his slimy hell of a home to eat would "gnaw the broken bones of his last human supper" (417-418). The great Beowulf and his 14 warriors have been called upon to save Hrothgar's people and destroy this beast. After devouring one man with ease, Grendel grasped Beowulf and found himself to be at the mercy of Beowulf's deadly grip.

The battle through the beautiful hall of Heorot proved to be successful when "him who of all the men on earth was the strongest" (471-472) defeated the retched beast. Beowulf proved to all that he would back down to no one. Any good battle can make a story exciting, and that is exactly what the battle with Grendel does to this story. At the very beginning of this strophe the reader is informed about Grendel's living quarters setting the mood in an evil tone. It is already known that Beowulf is the ideal of good, thus setting up the ever-exciting battle of good versus evil.

The battle was so intense that “ the high halls rang, its roof boards swayed and Danesshook with terror”(449-450). Such an intense battle is so enthralling that it is hard not to be enveloped in all the commotion. Grendel the beast who could not be defeated by any ordinary man “ whose hands were harder”(434) and there was nothing he could do about it. This great power Beowulf showed in the battle truly set him apart from all other normal men.

The whole time I was reading this part of the poem I was anxious to find the result of the battle. The translator did an excellent job of capturing the parts of the strophe, which made it so exciting. The way it was described that Grendel “ snatched the first Geat..

. drank the blood from his veins and bolted him down”(421-425) shows how graphic the language is in this poem making it much more exciting. I really became interested in the plot after this strophe because of the vivid and colorful imagery that was used to describe the battle. Imagery is very important part of capturing your audience and this strophe did exactly that. When trying to translate any type of literature it can be very hard to capture the excitement in the original work. When you have a specific point to get across it can be much harder, but in Beowulf is very clearly shown that Beowulf is loyal to his people, brave and courageous the true characteristics of a hero.